

## ABSTRACT

In the recent past military forces in Sri Lanka (SL) was expanded to face the waging war. Despite the greater induction of personnel, it is observed that a fair amount of personnel have opted to leave. This is not a healthy phenomenon since SL Army needs experienced hands at this post-war period.

In order to investigate this situation a research was planned to carry out with selected officers from middle grade cadres. During this research it was found that the reasons for leaving the Army are many fold. There are certain areas which are common to all three services namely the Army, Air force and the Navy. Some reasons have existed throughout the last few decades. The most vital point identified is the existing appraisal system. The existing appraisal system in the Army results premature retirement of the officers.

The research was carried out with the most vulnerable group of officers through a questionnaire and interviews. The data reveals the weaknesses in the appraisal system results in good officers leaving due to frustration and substandard officers opt to stay. This has a negative impact for the future of the service.

As such it is high time to carry out an in depth study in the existing appraisal systems and make appropriate corrective actions such as training of the appraisers, performance review discussions etc.

Researcher recommends that this message be taken in to all layers of officers of SL Army hierarchy and educate them of the importance for change. Contents of this research findings will be guide the members of the military but in particular SL Army in achieving its mission and the broad vision.

The SL Army is a unique profession that involves courage, dedication, integrity and honesty. The officers' main role is to lead and command men in battle and therefore, it's essentially required to mould officers who could meet the technological advancements and increasing lethality in battles. Further, it is of paramount importance to prepare an appropriate performance appraisal system for the SL Army officers which could identify and retain best officers to meet the future challenges.